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Milton As A Readable Great

It is a curious deficiency in our teaching of Milton from high school through college that we seldom think of what is relatively readable for the level of students we deal with and the time permitted us. I cannot imagine time more painfully wasted for the average high-school senior than to struggle with "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," and **Comus**. True, the unusually talented high-school teacher can make the most abstruse poem come alive, given enough time; but are not Milton's minor poems better suited to the graduate than to the high-school level? Which is easier to comprehend at any age, **Comus** or **Samson Agonistes**? Many high-school seniors can read **Samson** with pleasure, **Comus** only with torture. Yet **Samson** is almost never offered in the high-school years.

On the college-survey level, another crucial dilemma in readability confronts us. Usually we are expected to read with our students the first two books of **Paradise Lost**. What we do is to plunge our students, then, not only into the middle of the story, but into some of the most difficult poetry in English literature, weighted with classical references beyond anything the college student will ever experience. If we wish to start with the most readable book of **Paradise Lost**, should we not choose the most human of the whole poem, Book VIII? I cannot imagine any student who would not be interested in hearing the story of Book VIII from the teacher, then reading it for himself. Adam's account of his own birth, his first gaze upward, the world unfolding around him, his argument with God about a wife, the birth of Eve from his side, the nuptial night, the overwhelming submission of Adam to Eve's charm, Adam's question, "Love not the heav'nly spirits?" the angel blushing: What could be more delightful or human in its appeal to the college student?

Instead of that, we plunge him into a magnificent but often inscrutable symbolism, into a language remote from his experience, one that can be learned only with great patience and the gradual opening of Milton's genius in many unhurried hours. When one has only six periods to spend on Milton, may not the first one be most profitably spent in telling the story of the poem, beginning with that scene in Book VI when God announces to the assembled angels the viceregency of Christ, Lucifer's sudden resentment, and the birth of Sin from his head as he urges his cohorts to rebel against their king?

After such a story telling, if the syllabus requires the reading of Books I and II, they fall into more meaningful perspective. The college student realizes at least the range of Milton's humanity and comprehension of man's problems, as well as the framework of his great myth. I hope in time that in addition to Books I and II, the anthologies will not fail to include Book VIII, where if only an hour (or an extra hour) can be spared, the students can immerse themselves in as fascinating a story as world literature holds.

A resource often neglected in the teaching of Milton is **Samson Agonistes**, a wonderful great for readability, a poem, indeed, without a single classical reference, a familiar story, full of passion and contrast: a strong young man betrayed by a woman, blinded, imprisoned in the camp of his enemies. I know of no college student who cannot sit down and read **Samson Agonistes** without the help of an interpreter, indeed without even a dictionary, much less a classical dictionary. For the illiterate heretic, perhaps the reading of the Biblical story should be assigned, but even this is unnecessary to the person who has even heard the Samson story.

Teachers I know have assigned with conspicuous success merely the writing of a synopsis of **Samson**, with the student interweaving passages from the drama most meaningful to him or to the theme patterns of the story. Best of all, from the enjoyment of **Samson** may grow a passion for exploring Milton's infinite resources. For introducing Milton to the high-school student, to the college student of unspecialized interest, to the student who must read extensively at home rather than intensively in class, **Samson Agonistes** is the pathway to Milton's vast interior, as well as to his copious music.

Much as Milton deserves to be read, he may continue to be more hated than loved by growing generations of college students if he is not read with discrimination. There is a vantage point, so to speak, at which the uninitiated may best approach any great author, as the way to Dostoievsky is first through **The House of the Dead** and the way to Tolstoy through **Resurrection**. To attempt **War and Peace** before reading **Resurrection** or **Brothers Karamazov** before reading **The House of the Dead** is to set up a barrier that succeeding decades of patient effort may not overcome. So with Milton. To require "Il Penseroso" and **Comus** rather than **Samson Agonistes** is like requiring **Ulysses** or **The Magic Mountain** before the reading of **The Mayor of Casterbridge**. No book is a great book and no author is a great author unless we are ready for that part of him which our experience permits us to enter.

DON M. WOLFE
Brooklyn College

Classicist on Translation Courses

For some years now, no group of Greek and Latin scholars professionally gathered has been able to discuss the prospects ahead without encountering the question of "the classics in translation." As might well be expected, opinions have been varied and many. Time has brought modifications especially in the view that maintained a thoroughly vigorous and uncompromising dissent. But while today there is still considerable diversity in content and emphasis of feeling it is probably correct to say that, on the whole, professional classicists are inclined now to view the question with far greater dispassionateness and automatic disparagement than would have been the case a generation ago.

It would be temerarious, indeed, on my part to attempt to speak for my colleagues, and hence these brief remarks, with all their imperfections, must be regarded as entirely personal and individual. As I see it, the question of teaching the Greek and Latin classics in English translation in our American colleges and universities is one offering at once a challenge and a threat: the challenge to bring in some way to increasing numbers of students the message of the great tradition, and the threat of slovenliness and mediocrity if the message is badly conveyed. Or, again the process of instruction is itself, I believe, caught between two extremes—the one represented by such an approach as that of the Great Books Foundation program, the other by that of a too narrowly philological approach.

The Chicago Great Books Foundation is a thoroughly laudable enterprise in very many ways, and I have myself felt it a privilege to cooperate with it in our own city. But it envisions a reading of translations with no formal concern for author, milieu, influences, or anything else outside the very covers of the book itself at the moment under consideration. One can see great merit in such an approach for the definitely mixed groups attracted to Great Books meetings; but the procedure is not one for colleges and universities. At the other extreme, of course, one can see the faults of an exaggeratedly pedantic approach, in which the content read would be primarily a field for recondite philological speculation and the airier pursuit of sources.

I should like courses in translation to approach the content vigorously and sympathetically, with full attention to the authors producing the works read, to the age and civilization in which they were written, to their interrelations with one another, and to their recognizable influence and parallelism in later ages. I should like to think that those teaching courses in translation from the Greek and Latin authors are themselves conversant with Greek and Latin, since—say what we may—a translation can be far better and more sympathetically interpreted and discussed when the great original is not a closed book.

Naturally, as a classicist, I should envision the classicists themselves as the ideal persons to handle courses in translation; and as a matter of fact many of my colleagues are including such courses in their programs. Where classicists themselves are not available, I should, as I say, like to think that those handling the courses have had sufficient grounding in the classics to be somewhat at home in the originals.

WILLIAM CHARLES KORFMACHER
St. Louis University

(*Prof. Korfmacher is director of the Department of Classical Languages at St. Louis University, and chairman of the editorial committee of the Classical Bulletin. His "Ancient Answers to Today's Curriculum Problems" appeared in the Bulletin of the A.A.U.P. for summer,* 1949 (*XXXV*, (240)-250).

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CONTENTS

Milton as a Readable Great. Don M. Wolfe (Brooklyn) p. 1
Classicist on Translation Courses. William C. Korfmacher (St. Louis) p. 1
Jibberings from a Friendly Ghost. Burges Johnson p. 2
Bulletin Board. p. 2
Summer Opportunities. p. 3
Irving, Hazlitt, and the New Criticism. Robert Withington (Smith) p. 3
I've Been Reading. J. Gordon Eaker (Jersey City). ed. Reviews by Norman Foerster (Duke), Thomas A. Kirby (Louisiana State), Joseph Jones (Texas). p. 4
On Teaching Load. Francis Bowman (Duke), Sarah Wingate Taylor (Dominican), Ernest Van Keuren (Illinois) p. 5
Regional CEA Activities. p. 6

Jibberings From A Friendly Ghost

The literate world is still scolding the colleges for sending out a lot of young graduates who do not write good English. By "good" they mean English which successfully accomplishes any desired purpose.

We teachers have listened to this scolding for so long that one would think we might have done something about it by this time. But the truth seems to be that we are succeeding better than ever with the little group of students interested in the art and craft of writing, and hastening their acquirement of skills, so that young writers from all over the map are leaping from senior seminars into the full glory of authorship; but the rank and file of embryo engineers and insurance agents and bank clerks and foresters and lawyers and veterinaries are writing as badly as ever—or worse.

We have one excuse to offer, and it is a pretty good one: we are getting a horde of youngsters from the high schools more inadequately drilled than ever before in the fundamentals. That the high schools admit this, and have an even better excuse for their failure, does not absolve the colleges. We take 'em, and we gotta learn 'em! If we don't, we ourselves, like the Harvard professor who tutored the lad from the ghetto, may soon be talking and writing the way they do.

It is not easy for the colleges to find an answer to this problem, for they too are often overcrowded and overworked, and their teachers have neither the inclination nor the necessary training to do the groundwork the high schools have failed to do, and then find time to build a good structure on that patch-work foundation.

There is, of course, no single answer. But we can at least try to do everything possible to improve our techniques of composition teaching, and bring the force of all other teaching to bear upon this essential tool of scholarship.

I have many suggestions to make, now that I stand outside, looking in. But one at a time is enough. There are too many colleges where the formal work in composition is a succession of themes (or whatever you call them) based upon the assigned reading of the class. This is the easy way, because the teacher of written composition also teaches English Literature. Both are proper subjects for an undergraduate curriculum, and the yong instructor may teach them equally well; though it is a fortunate coincidence if he does, for he probably has been chosen because of his fitness to teach only one of them.

But if the student happens not to care much for the reading which is assigned (and compulsion takes fifty percent of the charm out of almost any book) he can't write very well about it. Whether he damns or praises it, he will not write sincerely and spontaneously, because he has no feeling at all about it except boredom.

But an even greater evil in this dove-tailing of literature and composition is that the reading is not selected with a view to its possible effect upon student writing, but for other reasons. Much of it has been handed down from an earlier period, when fashions in literary expression differed from those of today. The youngster who is gropingly finding a style of his own may have some fashion forced upon him which, according to today's good taste, is florid, or verbose, or pompous and affected. And that, as it happens, is one of the common charges against the writing of college graduates, if they can write at all, that it is unnatural and wordy to the point of obscurity.

It is a known fact that pickles do no harm to the human system, but actually have food value. They may even be pleasing to the taste. The same may be said of whipped cream. But the two things mixed together may become poisonous, especially to the young. I hope I do not need to labor the point.

BURGES JOHNSON
Stamford, Vermont

Bulletin Board

For the academic year 1951-1952, the University of Connecticut offers instructorships (part-time) to qualified students who plan to begin or continue graduate study in English. The minimum stipend for half-time instructors will be $1550 for nine months' service.

Applicants should forward a brief account of themselves and their plans, a transcript of their academic record, and two letters of recommendation. A photograph is desirable. Materials should be addressed to: Leonard F. Dean, Head, Department of English—U 25, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut.

Welcome to No. 1 of Vol. I, of *The Shakespeare Newsletter* (March, 1951, 4 pp.), edited by Louis Marder, Brooklyn College.

Ernest Van Keuren (Univ. of Illinois at Chicago), has resigned his administrative duties in favor of full-time teaching.

Middlebury College has announced the names of faculty members and lecturers for the thirty-second session of the Bread Loaf School of English (June 27 to Aug. 11).

Faculty members include Dr. George K. Anderson, Brown University; Prof. Warren Beck, Lawrence College; Dr. Dorothy Bethurum, Connecticut College; Dr. Reuben A. Brower, Amherst College; Dr. Herbert R. Brown, Bowdoin College. Also Prof. Edwin R. Coulson, Santa Monica City College; Prof. Donald Davidson, Vanderbilt University; Dr. Arthur E. Jensen, Dartmouth College; Dr. Hewette E. Joyce, Dartmouth College and Prof. Erie T. Volkert, Middlebury College.

Among the poets and authors who will lecture are Carl Carmer, Crane Brinton, Elizabeth Drew, Robert Frost, Hiram Haydn, David L. Thomson and William Carlos Williams.

During the past two years there have appeared in the Periodical Post Boy discussions regarding a proposed series of microfilm of English Literary Periodicals. The series is now coming into reality, as may be seen in Richmond Bond's article "English literary periodicals to form new microfilm series (Library Journal, Jan. 15, 1951). Purchases may be made through University Microfilms, 313 N. First Street, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Robert J. Menner, Sterling professor of English at Yale and a member of the faculty for thirty-two years, died, April 4, of a heart attack at Gaylord Farms Sanatorium in near-by Wallingford. His age was 59.

A fresh and stimulating collection of materials

Readings for College English

John C. Bushman
St. Louis University

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The ninety-six selections in this unusual collection represent a wide range of interest, purpose, and style, expressed mainly in the idiom of our own time. The many essays relating personal experiences are designed to help the student realize that he himself may have something important to write about. Discussion questions and writing assignments accompany many of the selections.

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SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES

President A. Whitney Griswold has announced a new program for the Master of Arts in teaching so that Yale may meet the "great challenge" of improving teaching in the nation's secondary schools. Scholarships of $450 to $1,000 are available. Inquiries should be addressed, before May 1, to Theodore Andersson, director, Master of Arts in Teaching, Hall of Graduate Studies, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

Denzil Bagster Collins is now Director of Arts, Letters, and Philosophy at Champlain College, Plattsburgh, New York.

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The Committee on the Language Program of the American Council of Learned Societies can offer a limited number of small study-aid grants to United States citizens who have some reason for extending their competences in Linguistics, and who contemplate the necessary study at the summer sessions of American universities in 1951.

Applications will be received from:

a) Teachers in colleges or universities proposing to include linguistic materials in their course offerings;

b) Staff members of Libraries or Museums, or Government research or policy-making personnel who have discovered a need for knowledge of Linguistics;

c) Those preparing to go into linguistic study, teaching, or research; and

d) Advanced graduate students of high competence who contemplate moving into the linguistic field or whose specialization requires linguistic competences which they cannot acquire at the institutions in which they are in attendance.

Minimum requirements for application are at least second-year graduate status, need of financial assistance, primary concern with the social sciences or the humanities, and United States or Canadian citizenship.

Awards will be made in the minimum amount necessary to complete the program of summer study proposed.

Application must be *completed* by May 1, 1951.

Forms and other information will be sent upon application to American Council of Learned Societies, 1219 Sixteenth Street, N. W. Washington 6, D. C.

The International Research Fund has set up attractive 1951 European Summer Programs.. It will arrange low cost opportunities for study and travel in Europe during the summer months. Arranged to meet your individual study requirements, the basic eight weeks cost is $290.

For further information and application forms write: International Research Fund, Inc., Holywell, Oxford, England.

Guerard's speech was indeed worth reprinting and distributing. I shall look forward to a *Critic* report, at least, of Katherine Koller's meeting.

No subject is of greater importance to us than hers.

FRANCIS E. BOWMAN
Duke University

IRVING, HAZLITT, AND THE NEW CRITICISM

Literary and professional periodicals have lately been devoting much space to what is called "the new criticism," which commands the attention of at least the "intelligentsia," many of whom take a part in the discussion, and some of whom exaggerate its importance. May I call your attention to two passages, which are still timely—though written some time since—by authors who have some claim to the title "critic," though they were other things besides?

In his *Sketch Book*, Washington Irving writes on "Rural Funerals" with sympathy. He observes:

> There is certainly something more affecting in . . . prompt and spontaneous offerings of nature, than in the most costly monuments of art; the hand strews the flower while the heart is warm, and the tear falls on the grave as affection is binding the osier round the sod; but pathos expires under the slow labour of the chisel, and is chilled among the cold conceits of sculptured marble. . . . It seems as if poetical custom always shuns the walks of cultivated society. In proportion as people grow polite they cease to be poetical. They talk of poetry, but they have learnt to check its free impulses, to distrust its sallying emotions, and to supply its most affecting and picturesque usages, by studied form and pompous ceremonial.

Here is surely something for the "new criticism" to ponder over. Are we getting too "polite," or too sophisticated, to appreciate poetry?

Hazlitt has written "On Taste," and his comments still interest the student. He asks:

> In hearing the accompaniment in the Messiah of angels' voices to the shepherds keeping watch at night, who has the most taste and delicacy, he who listens in silent rapture to the silver sounds, as they rise in sweetness and soften into distance, drawing the soul from earth to heaven, and making it partaker of the music of the spheres, or he who remains deaf to the summons, and remarks that it is an allegorical conceit? Which would Handel have been most pleased with, the man who was seen standing at the performance of the Coronation anthem in Westminster Abbey, with his face bathed in tears, and mingling "the drops which sacred joy had engendered" with that ocean of circling sound, or with him who sat with frigid, critical aspect, his heart untouched and his looks unaltered as the marble statue on the wall?

Perhaps the "new critic" can answer these questions in his esoteric jargon; but the students know the answers before they read him — if they ever do him that favor. As for the "intelligentsia"—they know all the answers, too.

It is unfortunate when the undergraduate feels obliged to draw all his opinions from the critic—often without reading, hearing, or seeing the work under consideration—because he thinks there is an "orthodox" belief which he is bound to accept. This attitude is not, I grant, often the critic's fault; but the critic does not always fight it, as he might. It is interesting to look back on the critics' comments on their contemporaries from the vantage-point of a century or more, and see how sometimes their light pales in that of the creator they damned. When the creator's light fails, the critic's cannot help keep it alive; both together achieve a well-deserved oblivion. One wonders whether this will be shared by the "new critics," who are very prominent to-day. Only time and taste can show what the future holds.

ROBERT WITHINGTON
Smith College

Norman Foerster will teach during the summer quarter at Leland Stanford.

Morton W. Bloomfield (Ohio State) has written to tell us: "how much I enjoyed Fisher's article on teaching linguistics in THE CEA CRITIC of a few months ago. It was first-rate."

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Texas Folk Song (University Press, Dallas, 302 pp. $5) by William A. Owens, is not a repetition of the Lomax volumes but a first collection of 118 songs recorded by the author during ten years of traveling over his native state. Mrs. Willa Koehn, who helped record many of them, has contributed simple piano arrangements of the original folk tunes. The songs have been arranged in seven categories: British Ballads, Songs of Doleful Love, Songs for a Laugh, Children's Songs, Civil War Songs, and Songs for Pilon (a small gratuity). Here are old favorites like "Barbara Allen," "The Hangman's Rope," "Jesse James," but as well numerous songs not reported outside of the state like "Too Late," "The Old Bachelor," "Love It Is a Folly," "Claud's Wife." There is an engaging foreword based on Bill Owens' amusing experiences among his folk. This volume is an excellent addition to the notable Texas Folklore Series.

ERNEST E. LEISY
So. Methodist Univ.

Ernest Leisy has left for Vienna, Austria. He expects to be back in Texas by mid-September.

Writing and Criticism
A Book for Margery Bianco
Edited by ANNE CARROLL MOORE and BERTHA MAHONY MILLER
Of special interest to students of children's literature, it presents four papers on the life and work of Margery Bianco, with examples of her critical writing and one of her imaginative stories, *The Apple Tree*. Publication date: May 1. Decorated by Valenti Angelo. Price: $3.00
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I'VE BEEN READING

J. Gordon Eaker — Literary Editor
Jersey City Junior College

A Paul Elmer More Miscellany. Edited by Arthur Hazard Dakin. Portland, Me. The Anthoensen Press. 1950. $5.00.

Here are thirty-six selections (often a page or less) from the anonymous writings of More. Almost all are taken from the **Independent**, the New York **Evening Post**, and the **Nation**, and they range in time from 1898 to 1921. The subjects are as various as Zola, Traherne, Nietzsche, Tagore, Robert Bridges, Progress, Humanism. These excerpts make up less than half of the book. Of greater value is the more than half devoted to check lists of publications. First come those by More himself, attaining a total of 819 items. In compiling these Mr. Dakin had access to Mr. D. C. Haskell's vast index of authors and contributions to the Nation from 1865 to 1917. A second check list gives, rather searchingly, writings about More from 1895 to 1949. It seems that at one time or another almost everybody had something to say about More and humanism.

The controversy over humanism ended in 1930, Babbitt died in 1933, More died in 1937. Where are the snows of yesteryear? They have often been recorded, with meteorological inexactitude, in histories literary, philosophical, and general. They have also melted, and flowed down through the years, irrigating broad and diverse fields, though the source of their contribution has often been forgotten. While there have been many dissertations and other expositions on the ideas of humanism, little has been done on its influence. Perhaps little can be done. The influence of the movement which the journalists called the "New Humanism" has blended, almost beyond analysis, with the influence of the humanistic tradition itself. The humanistic tradition, which Babbitt and More sought to clarify and reassert, was sure to persist in any case. Since their day much has happened which they would have applauded, but it has happened for reasons transcending any group of thinkers. Thus, it would be folly to trace back to Babbitt's first book, **Literature and the American College**, the Great Books movement, the rehabilitation of comparative literature, the direct study of texts ("New Criticism"), the various reforms of graduate training, the widespread concern for liberal education, the reassertion of the humanities, the return to the Hellenic and Judaic-Christian fundations of the Western world.

NORMAN FOERSTER
Duke University

The Poet Chaucer by Nevill Coghill (Oxford University Press, pp. xii—185, $2.00)

To the student of literature one of the blessings and banes of the twentieth century is the flourishing of research, which has so greatly broadened our knowledge even if it has not always deepened our wisdom. The reader of Chaucer may now become acquainted with the greatest of our earlier poets through innumerable editions (good, less good, no good), various translations and adaptations (faithful, bodlerized, sloppy), general commentaries (learned, discriminating, superficial), multitudinous essays, articles, and notes (excellent, doubtful, ridiculous). It is as fortunate as it is rare, then, that there should appear a genuinely good, brief volume on Chaucer, and such a one is **The Poet Chaucer** by Nevill Coghill, Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford. The opening paragraph of the introduction makes clear the author's objective:

Geoffrey Chaucer is our greatest comic poet and this study is an effort to discern the special gifts and accidents that made him so, ripening in him a full comic vision, at once essentially English and yet rooted in the whole culture of fourteenth-century Christendom.

The emphasis on the various poems is judiciously placed, too—almost half the volume is devoted to Chaucer's latest and most mature work. At the same time, however, not attempting an all-inclusive commentary has resulted in an entirely adequate treatment of all of Chaucer's longer poems. Few will object to the lack of analysis of the tales of the Physician, the Manciple, and the Parson—I suspect that G. Chaucer himself would not be too upset to have them passed over.

Mr. Coghill has obviously read Chaucer with both understanding and pleasure. The result is that **The Poet Chaucer** is one of the most stimulating, discerning, and informative of the many general Chaucer studies that have appeared during the last half century.

THOMAS A. KIRBY
Louisiana State University

In **Maiden Voyage** (Dutton, 1950), English scholars will find themselves neatly pinned to a cork by a Virginia professor of pharmacology who writes under the pseudonym "Barnaby Dogbolt." This light but not altogether lightweight novel records the adventures of a Professor Saltmarsh from Tyburn University (somewhere in the Midwest) who goes to England to burrow up source material for his biography of William Charnelhouse, a much-neglected seventeenth century metaphysical poet. What Saltmarsh finds is considerably more lively than Charnelhouse; his pilgrimage is highlighted by a number of satiric episodes all contributing to a dim view of scholars and scholarship in English which . . . well, I was lent this volume by a colleague in chemical engineering who had a glint in his eye, and I returned it with the admission that his suspicions were not entirely unfounded.

JOSEPH JONES
University of Texas

Again available

THE POETRY OF MATTHEW ARNOLD: A COMMENTARY

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Commentary on English Teaching Load

I think it necesary to break through the current formula for computing teaching load, and accrediting—the average pupils per teacher in a school, district, or state. Two fallacies in that formula, however convenient it is, work greatly to the disadvantage of good teaching in English. The first is that English classes, required of all pupils, always run larger than the average. The second is that the English teacher, usually more literate and often more intelligent than her colleagues, carries a disproportionately heavy load of activities.

For example, the North Carolina legislature is now debating the biennial appropriations bill. The budget for Education contains provision for reducing, in part, the state teacher load of 32 to 30. The legislature is not in a spending mood, and the education people are battling vigorously. A Durham county teacher has just contributed a fine long letter to the **Durham Sun** temperately explaining how impossible it is to give individual attention to pupils in her classes: "For the past several years I have had in my grade from thirty-eight to forty-three students. This year among my class of thirty-nine. . ."

We need to insist upon some distinctive treatment of English teaching. Such a demand may lose us the support of teachers of other subjects, but administrators ought to be impressed by the fact that in no subject is inadequate teaching so conspicuous.

FRANCIS E. BOWMAN
Duke University

Vocabulary Building

by

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(Rutgers University)

The three outstanding features of this book are:

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WILLIAM SLOANE ASSOCIATES
119 W. 57th St.
New York 19

In acordance with action taken in New York, I am submitting my reactions to the two committee reports printed in the January issue of the CRITIC.

Of Professor Werner's report I have nothing unfavorable to say. I am quite willing to give him the full blessing of the Association, and I hope he and his committee may be able to get some parts of his program adopted. With Miss Ellis's report I am in almost complete disagreement because I think the reasons she assigns for poor writing among college freshmen are not the ones that really matter.

The real reasons are four: 1. We live in an era of mass education. Mass production usually results in standardization somewhat below the highest level, though it makes the product available to many more people. (Compare medieval manuscripts with modern printed books.) 2. Modern parents relegate to the school teacher much of what was formerly home training. Personal hygiene, social behavior, vocational training, dietetics and health were not the concern of the school in grandma's day. If the 1951 curiculum were limited to the three R's, better writing might be common. 3. Knowledge has greatly increased in the last fifty years; schools must now cover material entirely unknown in the days when good writing was the rule. 4. All government projects are suffering from the tax squeeze; voters now resist tax increases. If a school administrator raised salaries to command more competent teachers or increased staffs to reduce loads, he would lose his job; and his successor would restore the status quo.

These four causes of poor preparation in writing cannot be removed by any effort of the CEA. Furthermore, Miss Ellis falls into the common error of too sweeping condemnation of the reading habits of school and college students. I should like to refer her to the study I made of this matter in 1948, a sumary of which was printed in the CRITIC for May, 1949.

ERNEST VAN KEUBEN
Univ. of Illinois (Chicago)

NEATE

Congratulations and best wishes to the New England Association of Teachers of English on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee Celebration, April 6 and 7, at the Hotel Commander, Cambridge. And thanks to Harry L. Walen, editor of **The English Leaflet**, for publishing the valuable series of articles on the history and significance of the New England Association of Teachers of English.

Maxwell H. Goldberg's "Higher Education for Citizenship", CEA CRITIC January 1951 supplement, defines the dilemma of American education so well that in the mind of one reader Dr. Goldberg verges on a definition of the cure. Perhaps all we need to do is to measure our problem of solving the paradox of quantity versus quality in education against human experience in achieving quality in other areas.

Supposing one wants to produce prize roses. The utmost of skilled personal care is mandatory. Or to train race horses, ballet dancers or track stars . . . Or to train quality in the citizens of tomorrow . . .

What happens to neglected children? Search the records of the Juvenile Court. What happens to students who receive little or no personal attention — through no fault of the teacher but simply because of the number of students— is blazoned in PTA meetings, Life magazine, articles anywhere on **What Is Wrong With American Education.** Are we so lacking in understanding how to achieve quality in human beings that we think we can have it without the **sine qua non** of quality in whatever **else?**

To train a whole human being to his best personal realization and service to society is a highly exacting and complex task. Not only must his mind be enlightened with knowledge, but his judgment must be exercised and his will motivated. Each individual demands keen and vigilant care. Or are we perhaps operating on a Rousseau-esque premise that humans develop best with the minimum of direction? Do we honestly believe that the citizens we need are to be grown like Topsy?

In view of our present results the premises on which we educators have been proceeding will bear reexamination. There appears to be a conflict between what contemporary social conditions demand and the methods we use to attain it.

Custom-built autos, clothes, anything, we know how to get. But we continue to belabor the issue of how to get quality in human beings without providing the necessary means. Quantity versus quality in education is an intolerable contradiction. What we need is twice as many teachers. Even a mediocre teacher will do twice as good a job with half as many students as the average teacher carries today.

CEA CRITIC, Jan. 1951, printed a resolution adopted in 1949 by a joint meeting of Central Atlantic College Conference on English and N. Y. Council of College Teachers of English, to the effect that deficiency in English may best be overcome by reducing composition classes to a maximum of eighteen. How realistic!

SARAH WINGATE TAYLOR
Dominican College
San Raphael, California

Dean B. Lyman Jr. (Adams State College) has continued and concluded Coleridge's *Christabel* under the title *Complete Christabel.*

New 1951 Editions

THE COLLEGE OMNIBUS
Seventh Edition, edited by Leonard F. Dean.

Hodges' HARBRACE COLLEGE HANDBOOK
Third Edition, by John Hodges in consultation with Francis Connolly.

THE COLLEGE SURVEY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
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"All that I am saying is that in periods of stress we need not fewer meetings but more frequent meetings; we might be thinking and talking together about means of making the good we must safeguard more effective in the lives of those for whom the next heartbeat is a major project. . . Perhaps some of the sections of our next regional meeting can be devoted to ways of accomplishing the ends we all seek; perhaps the vague hunger for the nourishment we can give will inform smaller group meetings; perhaps we can devise methods of engaging more purposefully in adult education.

"I suppose we humanists have solved the problem of perpetual motion, but the aimlessness of that motion has not taken us far on the road to the good life or even to survival. It may be that we have been trying to square the circle by turning out square specialized pegs to fit round holes, but I am more inclined to believe that the humanist is the potential concentric who can, with some unity of purpose and effort, round out an eccentric world, eccentric nations, and eccentric individuals. Anything less than a crusade with some such purpose seems to me to need, in a baffled world, a justification which I can not easily find. When we're out hunting bear, we can't stop for every gopher."

STUART CUTHBERTSON
University of Colorado

(*Reprinted from The News Bulletin of the Rocky Mountain MLA.*)

Have you read what LIFE (Feb. 12) has to say about the

AMERICAN COLLEGE DICTIONARY

"...Probably the finest 'college' dictionary that has been produced in the U.S. ... **The American College Dictionary** contains all of Thorndike's contributions and most of Barnhart's, plus those of a distinguished staff of outside experts... In the $5.00-$7.00 price range long dominated by Webster's excellent **Collegiate**, Funk and Wagnall's **Standard** and Winston's **Encyclopedic**, it is rapidly moving to the top..."

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SPRING REGIONAL CEA MEETINGS

NECEA

Regional president Alan McGee announces the following tentative program for the spring meeting of the NECEA, Mount Holyoke College, April 28.

Morning Program:

10-11 a.m. Registration, $1.00. Mary E. Woolley Hall

10:45 a.m. Business Meeting.

11-12 noon (I). Morning Session Lecture by Wallace Stevens

12:00 noon Luncheon: Wilbur Recreation Room in Mary E. Woolley Hall. $2.00. (Places to be reserved by April 20)

Afternoon Program:

1:30 p.m. (II). Drama, Theatre Arts, and the Liberal Curriculum.

Francis Fergusson, Princeton
Denis Johnston, Mount Holyoke
Maurice Valency, Columbia

3:00 p.m. (III). James Joyce's **Ulysses**

Cesar L. Barber, Amherst College
Elizabeth Drew, Smith College
Howard Nemerov, Bennington College

3:00 p.m. (IV). The Teaching of Pope

Reuben A. Brower, Amherst College
Maynard Mack, Yale University

4:15 p.m. (V). Meredith's **Ordeal of Richard Feverel**

Charles J. Hill, Smith College

4:15 p.m. (VI). Freshman English without Texts, an explanation of Amherst's revolutionary course.

G. Armour Craig, Amherst College

4:15 p.m. (VII). The Educational Value of the General Examination

Katherine C. Balderston, Wellesley College
J. McG. Bottkol, Mount Holyoke College
Fred B. Millett, Wesleyan University

5:00-6:00 p.m. Reception by the Department of English, Mount Holyoke College.

6:00 p.m. Dinner, Mead Hall Dining Room, $2.00

(Places must be reserved by April 20)

7:30 p.m. Lecture by Peter Viereck, Mount Holyoke College "Keeping a Free Society Free"

Carson C. Hamilton (Michigan State) reports progress in the setting up of a regional CEA affiliate for Michigan. Committees on Program, Membership, Publicity, Nominations, and Contributions are at work.

INDIANA CEA

The Indiana College English Association is now preparing for its sixteenth annual conference at Anderson College on May 11 and 12.

With current 1951 membership now beyond the 100 mark, the Association has hopes of topping last year's record of 167 by offering several new services: (1) a newsletter, *The Associator*, which might be the germinal beginnings of a modest journal; (2) a directory of all Indiana college English teachers, with their degrees and interests; (3) a more personal and exciting type of conference featuring small discussion groups rather than large unwieldy paper-reading sessions.

Discussions arranged to date and their respective chairmen are as follows: "Teaching English as a Foreign Language"—Georges Deknop, exchange professor from Belgium at Ball State Teachers College; "Shelley the Pacifist"—Warren Staebler, Earlham; "World Literature and Comparative Literature"—Hurst Frenz, Indiana University; "Theme-grading Standards"—Cary Graham, Butler; "Galsworthy, Forsyte, and Others"—William Schwab, Purdue; "Pro's and Con's of American Literature Texts"—Leland Miles, Hanover.

Paul Landis, noted and gifted professor at the University of Illinois and an ardent student of Robert Browning, has been secured by Professor Pence of DePauw, ICEA president, as the banquet speaker.

In charge of the general program for the conference is Dr. William Sutton, vice-president of ICEA and editor of the fledgling *Associator*. Miss Florence Orr is serving as local chairman at Anderson.

All college teachers who are not members of ICEA and wish to join should send their dollar dues to Dr. Leland Miles, Hanover College. A cordial invitation to membership is also extended to secondary school teachers who are past or present officers of the Indiana Council of Teachers of English or any of its affiliated clubs, and to any "laymen" who are especially interested in the college teaching of English.

The Middle Atlantic CEA will meet at Western Maryland College, Westminster, Md., April 21.

The NYCEA will meet May 5, at Syracuse, following NYSEC luncheon talk, "How Important is Poetry?" by Mark Van Doren.

The Chicago CEA will meet in the latter part of April, at Roosevelt College.

PENN. CEA

Gettysburg College, April 28

The morning session to be e titled "Exploring the Professi in Crisis," will be presided ov by George J. Becker of Swart more as moderator. Three spea ers will include Lionel Conra Aluminum Company of Americ who has "some very astringe things to say about academic pu blindness generally;" Elisabe Schneider of Temple, who will co sider dismissal policies, and, pos bly, discrimination against wom in promotion and salary within t profession.

Bruce Dearing will speak luncheon under the title fro Blake "The Tygers of wrath a wiser than the Horses of instru tion." He is not going to propo that all English teachers don u forms or race to the barricade he means only to inveigh agai the notion that English teache are or should be impersonal, i nocuous, even impotent. He wan to hold up for examination th popular composite of the Profes which asks us to believe simultā eously that the creature is a surdly harmless, with bats in h belfry and harpsichords in his st dy, and that he is wickedly da gerous, with conspirators in h attic and bombs on his boo shelves. He observes that M Goldberg must realize that h speaking on the two Kilkenny ca last year, he may have created monster!

For the afternoon session, Wi liam Werner of Penn State is present a paper on literary vogu and the popular classic, dealin specifically with the Henry Jam revival (or, as he suggests, resu rection).

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